



First Quarter, 2000
Volume 1, Issue 1

Welcome to Our First Issue

Welcome to the first edition of the VINELINE!

This is the official newsletter of the Department of Corrections VINE Program, and we hope to make it a valuable and much-used source of information for Crime Victims and those who help them.

As with any new project, this first effort may hold only a small resemblance to what it may eventually become. In fact, we hope that is the case. We want this newsletter to grow in a direction which will better help you, the victim's first line of support, and with your input and feedback, we will.

We invite you to send letters, essays, questions, suggestions, and other matters that you feel would benefit the Victim Support community. We invite suggestions regarding the content and format of future editions.

This is your newsletter, so let us know what you think.

To request additional copies of this Newsletter, please contact us at:

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Frankfort, Kentucky 40602-2400
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VINE LINE

Kentucky VINE Continues to Grow

*Karen DeFew Cronen, Manager,
Offender Information Services*

February 14, 2000 marked the fourth anniversary of the Kentucky Department of Corrections VINE Program (Victim Information and Notification Everyday).

Kentucky was the first state in the nation to have VINE at both local and statewide levels. This state's VINE Program has been a model that many states and local jurisdictions all over the country have used when implementing their systems.

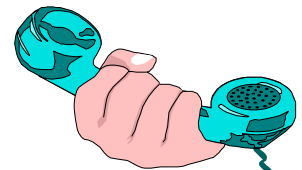
The Department of Corrections engaged the services of the V.I.N.E. Company to provide a fully automated victim notification system. The VINE Program provides victims with information about the status of an offender as well as fully automated telephone notification of changes in inmate status, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The VINE Program is a free public service available to all concerned citizens.

The program has grown significantly since 1996 to include jails, state institutions, juvenile facilities, and violent offenders placed in mental health facilities for evaluation.

As the VINE Program continues to grow, the Department of Corrections has established a VINE Unit. Steve Evans has been appointed as VINE Program Administrator to oversee the functions of the program. Daksha Shah, Administrative Specialist, is a point of contact for the VINE Program, and Donna West, Computer Systems Technician, oversees all computer functions of the program. This is a great group of staff with a strong willingness to assist everyone. Please call and find out about the VINE Program at 502-564-5061. Our new unit is excited about helping as the . . .

***VINE Program
continues to grow.***

We wish to recognize Karen Cronen and Louis Smith for their tireless efforts to establish the Department of Corrections VINE Program. Their efforts resulted in the first statewide VINE program in the United States.



800-511-1670

Our Goal Is...

To Proactively address, as a team,
the need to protect victim's rights to be safe.

To ensure complete and accurate information
in order that victims may stay informed.

To promote statewide awareness of the VINE Program.

Introducing....Our V.I.N.E. Program Staff



Stephen C. Evans



Daksha G. Shah



Donna E. West

Stephen C. Evans was selected as Program Administrator for the VINE Program, effective December 1, 1999. Mr. Evans has worked for the Department of Corrections in various capacities since 1992. He has extensive knowledge and experience in finance and budgeting as well as other fiscal areas. His most recent position was Training Instructor for the Division of Correction Training. Mr. Evans was a principal instructor for the MARS Program.

Mr. Evans graduated from Tennessee Technological University with a B.S. Degree in Business Administration. He has a distinguished U. S. Army and U. S. Army Reserve career, retiring at the rank of Colonel.

Mr. Evans' work experience includes positions at Northpoint Training Center, Correctional Industries, the Division of Corrections Training, Jefferson County Local Government, and six years in the private sector.

Daksha G. Shah started working for the VINE Program as Administrative Specialist on September 16, 1999. Prior to this, she worked as a Classification and Treatment Officer at Frankfort Career Development Center.

In addition to her duties as a Classification and Treatment Officer, she was single-handedly responsible for starting and implementing the Alcohol and other Drug Abuse (AODA) Program at Frankfort Career Development Center.

Her prior work experience includes working as a Tax Examiner, Collection Officer and Bankruptcy Specialist for the Kentucky Revenue Cabinet. She has worked for State Government for sixteen years, in various capacities.

Ms. Shah graduated with a B.S. Degree in Philosophy and Psychology.

Donna West began working as the Systems Support Technician for the VINE Program on October 16, 1999. After attending Murray State University, she worked for the Commonwealth of Kentucky as a Programmer/Analyst for ten years. She then moved into the private sector as a Certified NetWare Engineer. For the past ten years, she has managed a systems support help desk.

Contacting your Legislator

Who are your state senator and representative? How do you go about contacting them? Modern communications makes it easier than ever to get your opinion to state legislators. If you have access to the Internet, the legislative web site is the place to go. The address is <http://www.lrc.state.ky.us>.

This site will allow you to determine who your representatives are, give you a brief background of the individuals, along with a picture, and allow you to send e-mail. You can also get a listing of committee meetings, the status of bills, etc. on the site.

There are also several toll free telephone numbers that will allow you to get in touch or keep in touch.

1-800-372-7181 To leave a message for a legislator
1-800-633-9650 For the legislative calendar of meetings
1-800-896-0305 TTY message line

1-800-701-1488 To check on the status of a bill
1-800-592-4399 To reach a citizen on legislative business

Crime Victims Now Have a Voice In Kentucky

By Willis P. McKee Jr., M.D.
Chairman of the Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Board

February 28, 2000

My mother was murdered in 1995. When the perpetrator was arrested and the judicial process started, my family and I were uncertain as to what was happening, what was going to happen, and what our role was to be.

In stepped Barbara Davis, Victim's Advocate. She was assigned to us as part of the Victim's Advocacy Program. She educated us on the process and the players, and kept us informed in what was going on, from the initial arraignment through the sentencing.

We have had to go back to the courtroom for various hearings during the appeals process and she is always there. The Victim's Advocate Program also notifies us of appeals by the defendant: time, place, and character, and of any court decisions.

It is easy to view the court process as favoring the criminal and excluding the victims and their families. Barbara has shown us that this is not so. The Victim's Advocates are a great assistance to the victims and families that have to go through this process.

Recently the defendant in my mother's case filed an appeal about the sentencing process. We were promptly notified when, where, and which court, and we were notified of the decision as soon as it was published. We will also be notified when the person is to come up for parole.

We were shown how to file victim's impact statements, which will be part of the inmate's permanent file. Through the VINE Program, we have a toll-free number to call that will tell us where he is incarcerated. The victims and families are aided and represented as never before.

My family decided to try to make something positive come from our tragedy. We saw that the Juvenile laws needed revision and became aware of other changes needed in dealing with Juvenile defendants. We began collecting signatures for petitions to the Kentucky Legislature, asking for its help. The Kentuckians' Voice for Crime Victims signed on to help, and then-candidate Paul Patton called me and pledged his support.

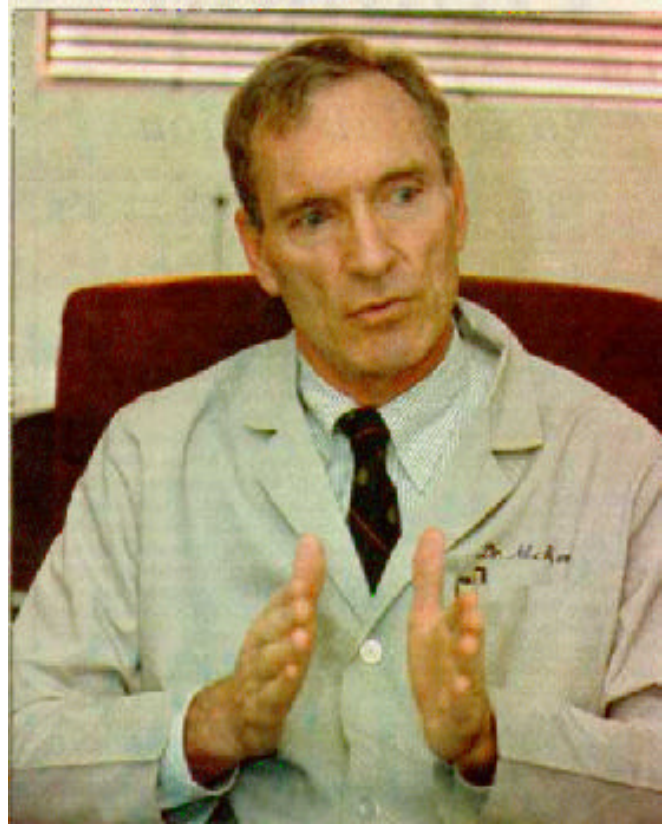


Photo courtesy of The State Journal

He kept his promise to push for the legislation and several legislators sponsored the bill. Kentucky's Juvenile Justice system is now to my mind, on a par with any in the country.

Governor Patton was kind enough to appoint me as the Chairman of the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board. This Board is charged with making recommendations to the Governor on Juvenile Justice policy, funding, and activities. It is made up of representatives from all departments of state government that deal with juveniles and of citizens representing various categories of victims and various community agencies.

The Board meets roughly quarterly and has subcommittees overseeing facilities and funding programs and considering proposed legislation. These committees report to the Board as a whole at meetings.

From a victim's family point of view, I appreciate the support that is now available to us. From the viewpoint of a citizen of the Commonwealth, I am proud of the strides Kentucky has made in Juvenile Justice and Victim's Advocacy.

I know many things had to come together to make this happen, and that many people had to be involved, but I hope some small part of it can be dedicated to the memory of Mary Evelyn McKee.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

When I try to place an inmate on furlough, why does the system tell me he is out of custody?

This happens when the inmate has been previously released on furlough and his return was not entered into the system. Even though you are required to enter a return date when entering the furlough release information, this will not automatically place him back into custody status on that date. You must always enter the return to custody information when he actually returns to custody or the system will think he is still out on furlough.

The only way to release him on furlough when this has occurred is to first enter his return information, and then enter his new release information.

A victim has been notified that a county jail inmate has been released, but in reality he has been transferred to a state facility. Why does this happen?

This happens because either the booking system used by the jail has not been updated with the current release code data table or the data entry clerk accidentally entered a general release code rather than the "transfer to state facility" code. When this occurs, the Inmate shows up as out of custody until the jail enters a correction, or the inmate arrives at the state facility and the intake information is entered into the system.

A victim has forgotten his pin number. Can the notification be turned off?

The Vine Program staff can not turn off the notification calls because of forgotten pin numbers. The purpose of the pin number is to ensure that only the registered victim can stop the calls. While the notification calls can be a nuisance, we could possibly place someone's life in jeopardy by stopping the calls and this program's commitment is to save lives.

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED